

Respond and Think Critically

Reading Focus

Quick Check

1. Why is Hurston's grandmother afraid of her granddaughter's boldness?
2. Who visits Hurston's school?
3. What do the visitors send from Minnesota?
4. What are the narrator's favorite books?

Read with a Purpose

5. What details show that Hurston, even as a child, responded to language and to storytelling?

Reading Skills: Identifying Historical Context

6. Review the list of details about the historical context that you gathered as you read. Then, summarize your findings in two or three paragraphs, focusing on the details that shed the most light on the historical realities and important social issues that Hurston reveals.

Literary Focus

Literary Analysis

7. **Analyze** Which of Hurston's comments give you particular insight into her personality? For example, what do you learn from her responses to the story of David in the Bible?
8. **Infer** What details indicate that even as a young girl Zora wanted to get away from the constraints of her small town and see the wider world?
9. **Infer** Why do you think the two visitors came to Zora's school?
10. **Analyze** Hurston's unmistakable voice comes through clearly in this autobiography. What is her tone? Does she reveal any bitterness? Explain.

11. **Make Judgments** Some other writers of the Harlem Renaissance criticized Hurston for not emphasizing the oppression of African Americans by the white establishment. Is their criticism just? Instead of political and social issues, what does she focus on in her autobiography?

12. **Literary Perspectives** How does Hurston's writing style allow her to express a child's perspective without sounding childish?

Literary Skills: Autobiography

13. **Compare and Contrast** What do you learn from an autobiography that you probably would not learn from a biography? On the other hand, what can a biography tell you that an autobiography cannot?

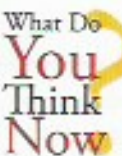
Literary Skills Review: Setting

14. **Extend** The **setting** of a piece of literature is the time and place in which the story occurs. How would the excerpt from *Dust Tracks on a Road* have been different if it had taken place fifty years earlier? Fifty years later?

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use It in Your Writing Write about something that happened to you in your own early education. Make sure your story contains two or three idioms.



How important is the ability to read today? Can progress be made if children cannot read? Explain.